DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 034 051 08 VT 009 685

TITLE	Florida Research Coordinating Unit for Vocational Education. Final Report.
INSTITUTION	Florida Vocational Programs Research Coordinating Units, Tallahassee.
Spons Agency	Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Bureau of Research.
Bureau No	BR-6-3047
Pub Date	31 Aug 69
Grant	OEG-2-7-063047-1619
Note	16p.
EDRS Price	EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.90
Descriptors	Conferences, *Educational Research, *Program Descriptions, *Research Coordinating Units, Research Projects, *State Programs, *Vocational Education
Identifiers	*Florida

Abstract

This final report of the Florida Research Coordinating Unit (RCU) for Vocational Education covers a period from December 1, 1966 to August 31, 1969. The RCU was established to coordinate, encourage, and assist in the preparation of studies needed to improve vocational education in Florida, and to disseminate the results. This report includes a listing of major purposes, activities, and accomplishments of the RCU during the 4-year period and projects future operational plans of the unit. (CH)

BR 6-3047
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FINAL REPORT
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FLORIDA RESEARCH COORDINATING UNIT
FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

K. M. Eaddy, Director
Division of Vocational, Technical, and Adult Education
State Department of Education
Tallahassee, Florida 32304

August 31, 1969

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

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SUMMARY

Purpose:

The purposes of the Florida Vocational Program Research Coordinating Unit are to coordinate, encourage, and assist in the preparation of studies needed to improve vocational education in Florida. The Unit has initiated and coordinated research, developed a statewide program of research and evaluation studies and experimentation, and provided for the dissemination of results. Unit personnel have cooperated with local, county, area, and state educational agencies, and other public agencies within and outside the state, involved either directly or indirectly, in all aspects of vocational and technical education.

Procedures:

In order to accomplish the purposes of the Unit it has been necessary to utilize the special services of all vocational educators and their colleagues in other disciplines to: (a) compile summaries of vocational research; (b) identify resources available for conducting vocational-technical studies; (c) assist in developing additional resources; (d) identify vocational-technical problem areas needing study; (e) encourage concentration of resources in those areas; (f) field test innovations; and (g) disseminate results.

Local Program Development Associates in selected counties have received intensive in-service training and were assigned responsibility for conducting studies on high priority problems. State university representatives have conducted more sophisticated research studies solicited by the State Department of Education.

Expected Educational Contribution:

It is anticipated that the above activities will result in a viable state and local structure for accomplishing planned program change.

INTRODUCTION

This final report of the Florida Research Coordinating Unit for Vocational Education covers a period from December 1, 1966 to August 31, 1969.

The report includes a listing of major purposes, activities, and accomplishments of the RCU during the four-year period and projects future operational plans of the Unit.

Vocational, technical, and adult education activities in Florida

are centered upon an overall objective to assist present and prospective employees, in occupations requiring less than a baccalaureate degree, develop understandings and insight of basic knowledge, skills, and values necessary for effective entry and progress in the world of work. Implicit is the assumption that all citizens are entitled to equal educational opportunities; therefore, vocational education will be available to persons of all ages, ability levels, and backgrounds as an institutional arrangement through which they may obtain an education designed to lead toward the establishment of an economically self-supporting citizenry.

To realize the purpose, a broadened, expanded, and intensified program of research, concerning people, jobs, and schools, is needed as a realistic basis for planning meaningful vocational-technical programs.

PURPOSES

The purposes of the Florida Research Coordinating Unit for Vocational Education are to coordinate, encourage, assist in preparing, and conduct when necessary studies needed to improve vocational education in Florida. The Unit was established to develop a state-wide program of studies and experimentation, and to provide for the dissemination of results.

Unit personnel have cooperated with local, county, area, and state educational agencies, and other public agencies within and outside the state, involved either directly or indirectly, in all aspects of vocational and technical education.

PROCEDURES

In order to accomplish the purposes of the Unit it was necessary to: (a) compile summaries of vocational research; (b) identify resources available for conducting vocational-technical studies; (c) assist in developing additional resources; (d) identify vocational-technical problem areas needing study; (e) encourage concentration of resources in those areas; (f) field test innovations; and (g) disseminate results.

The purposes and objectives outlined above could not be achieved in isolation. They required utilization of special talents of vocational educators and their colleagues in other disciplines. Specifically, assistance was solicited from:

.Local Vocational Personnel

.Junior College Personnel

.Vocational Teacher Educators

.University Personnel in Other Disciplines

.State Department of Education Personnel

.Other State Agency Personnel

.Non-profit Research Organizations

RESULTS

The Unit has been concerned with establishing promising directions for accomplishing the research coordinative function outlined above. An overview of activities designed to accomplish the program included:

.Acquainting interested and responsible personnel from local vocational-technical schools, junior colleges, senior colleges, the State Department of Education, other state agencies, and professional, non-profit research organizations with the purposes of the Florida Vocational Program Research Coordinating Unit. Correspondence, brochures, newsletters, and personal contacts have served as methods of acquainting and keeping personnel informed.

.Compiling and distributing descriptions of research, studies, and investigations significant to vocational-technical and adult education being conducted within and outside the state.

.Identifying human resources available for conducting vocational-technical research through contacts and consultation with local vocational administrators, senior and junior college deans and counselors, educational psychologists, rural sociologists, economists, other university personnel, State Department of Education personnel, and related public agency personnel.

.Determining significant, researchable problem areas in vocational, technical, and adult education through:

..Meetings and discussions with committees in each of the vocational, technical, and adult education sections.

..Special committee work during the Annual Vocational, Technical, and Adult Education Leadership Conference.

..Work groups attending the RCU Invitational Research and Development Conference.

..Research Coordinating Council composed of vocational educators within the various service sections to assist with coordination of research activities.

.Consulting with personnel at all educational levels as they:

..Developed special grant applications.

..Designed data gathering instruments.

..Analyzed and interpreted data.

..Planned future research programs.

..Collected data for projects.

..Established a Program Development Associates group composed of people actively involved in experimental projects who assist project directors with research implementation.

..Worked with selected groups to field test programs.

DISCUSSION

The Florida Research Coordinating Unit was approved in June, 1965. The first full-time employee was secured in September, 1965 and the second was employed in January, 1966; therefore, the Unit was detained in an initial establishment of promising directions for accomplishing its function. Since that time additional personnel have been employed to acquire and disseminate research findings and conclusions to educators and to cooperate with the Vocational-Technical Education ERIC Clearinghouse.

An analysis of Unit activities indicates that the employees worked to accomplish the following broad functions:

1. Compile summaries of vocational studies and experimentation in progress.

2. Identify resources available for conducting vocational-technical studies and assist in developing additional resources.

3. Identify vocational-technical problem areas needing study and encourage concentration of resources in those areas.

4. Field test innovations through pilot programs.

5. Disseminate results.

6. Program administration and supervision.

The Unit staff, in establishing the functions, assumed that there is a relationship between all educational institution arrangements and planned change in vocational education, and that each institution has specific functions in the various phases of the innovative process. The State Department of Education must accept a major role in problem identification, program development, dissemination, and implementation carried out through close cooperation with local schools, institutions of higher education, other interested agencies, and the federal government as each fulfills supporting roles.

Each of the above functions has received initial attention. Problems to be researched have been identified and priorities established. A continuing problem receiving consideration

centers upon the provision of programs to train persons interested in designing and conducting studies and investigations to improve vocational education. A corollary problem is that of buying time of personnel at all educational levels to become involved in each aspect of the research and development process used in program improvement through planned change. Several counties have established research coordinating units to work cooperatively with the State RCU in conducting needed research studies. Recently a research position has been established in one state university for vocational education. Plans are made for establishing research units in each State university to cooperate with the RCU in bringing resources to bear on identified problems in vocational education.

Summaries of vocational studies and experimentation have been made. The findings supply needed information useful in developing innovative programs to be field tested. There continues to exist in Florida a need to establish pilot school centers to field test and demonstrate more flexible programs, methods, and procedures in the vocational-technical preparation of its citizens. Plans to establish the pilot centers during the 1969 fiscal year were developed during the summer of 1968 and 18 schools field-tested programs that will be demonstrated during the 1969-70 school year.

Available human resources have been identified and brought to bear on some of the most pressing problem areas. An analysis of vocational studies and investigations with which the Florida RCU has been associated shows that project applications developed to provide answers to problems affecting the Florida educational system having implications for the nation as a whole include:

1. Establishment of a State Vocational Studies and Experimental Programs Coordinating Unit -- Dr. G. W. Neubauer, State Department of Education -- USOE-5-85-130

2. Factors Related to Educational and Occupational Aspirations of Early Adolescent Males From Culturally Deprived Families -- Dr. Ruth J. Dales, Florida State University -- USOE-5-85-058

3. A Proposal For The Development of Pre-Vocational Education Literacy Course to be Used in Computer-Assisted Instruction with Disadvantaged Youth and Adults -- Florida State University -- Dr. Ed Hankin -- USOE-6-1458

4. Analysis of Research on Selected Aspects of Evaluation in Adult Education -- Elizabeth N. Sutton, Florida State University -- USOE-5-10-252

5. A Follow-Up Normative Study of Negro Intelligence and Achievement -- Dr. Wallace Kennedy, Florida State University -- USOE-5-85-004

6. Development of Post-High School Wage Earning Programs in Home Economics Education Utilizing The Resource Guide Care and Guidance of Children -- Dr. Ruth Dales, Florida State University -- USOE-7-0382

7. An Inter-Disciplinary Approach to Improving the Development of Culturally Disadvantaged Children -- Dr. Ira Gordon, University of Florida -- USOE-5-85-080

8. Differential Identification of Successful Technical Students in Junior Colleges -- Charles Joseph Turner and Dr. Wilson H. Ghertin, Central Florida Junior College -- USOE-5-85-064

9. An Eight-Week Summer Institute Training Program to Retrain Office Education Teachers for Teaching Business Electronic Data Processing -- Dr. Theodore Koschler, Miami-Dade College -- USOE-5-85-098

10. Computerized Drafting and Design -- Alex G. Morphonias, Miami-Dade Junior College -- USOE-7-0435

11. Development of An Experimental Design for a Multi-Cultural Nongraded Area Vocational School Associated With a Community College -- Nelson Donnell, Brevard County -- USOE-6-2164

12. Learning Laboratory to Teach Basic Skills in a Culturally-Deprived Area -- Nicholas Borata, Dade County -- USOE-5-85-073

Projects developed to provide answers to questions pertinent to local, area, and state problems include:

1. A Study to Identify Problem Areas Through Investigation and Research -- Dr. Inez Frink -- VTAD-566-70

2. A Workshop for Business Education Teachers -- Dr. Inez Frink -- VTAD-566-73

3. A Study of Mechanics Instruction Needed in High School Vocational Agricultural Classes -- University of Florida -- W. T. Loften -- VTAD-566-6

4. Determination of a Course of Study for High School Vocational Agriculture -- University of Florida -- W. T. Loften -- VTAD-566-7

5. Development of a Design for Research and Plans for Vocational Development in Agriculture -- University of Florida -- W. T. Loften -- VTAD-566-38

6. A Study to Identify Business Education Problem Areas Through Investigation and Research -- University of Florida -- Dr. James Crews -- VTAD-566-69

7. A Work Experience Program in Business Education -- University of Florida -- Dr. James Crews -- VTAD-566-72

8. A Two-Week Summer Seminar in Business Education -- University of Florida -- Dr. James Crews

9. A Study in Occupational Education -- University of South Florida -- Donald P. Jaeschke -- VTAD-566-14

10. A Study to Identify Problem Areas Through Investigation and Research -- Florida Atlantic University -- Ruth Brewer -- VTAD-566-74

11. A Developmental Approach to Vocational Curriculum Improvement at Secondary Level -- Brevard County -- Burgess Meadows

12. An Evaluation Study of Secondary Programs for Disadvantaged Youth -- Brevard County -- Burgess Meadows

13. A Pilot Study in Home Economics -- To Evaluate an Innovative Secondary Program -- Broward County -- Mrs. Mary Ray -- VTAD-268-1

14. A Determination of Occupational Needs for Charlotte County -- Hugh Adams -- VTAD-566-20

15. County Survey of Occupational Needs -- Collier County

16. A Survey of Vocational-Technical Education Needs of Communities Served by Lake City Junior College -- Columbia County -- William D. Ceely -- VTAD-566-10

17. A Study Designed to Aid in Determining the Direction of Vocational Program Development in DeSoto County -- VTAD-566-40

18. A Study to Determine Vocational Needs for Franklin County -- J. B. McKissack -- VTAD-566-45

19. A Survey of Related Agricultural Occupations -- Gadsden County -- M. D. Walker -- VTAD-566-90

20. A Survey to Determine Occupational Needs of Glades County -- Robert L. Hipps -- VTAD-566-21

21. A Survey for Construction Plans of the Lake County Area Vocational-Technical Center -- Ray M. Hayes -- VTAD-566-81

22. A Survey of Agri-Business Employment Opportunities -- Lake County -- Ray M. Hayes -- VTAD-566-84

23. A Survey of Agricultural Occupations Needing Agricultural Skills and Competencies in Lee County -- R. F. Lee, Manatee County -- VTAD-566-83

24. A Survey of Nassau County With Emphasis on Determining Employment Needs -- Robert Johnson -- VTAD-566-9

25. An Off-Farm Agricultural Occupational Survey -- Palm Beach County -- Pellon Morris -- VTAD-566-93

26. A Study to Provide Pinellas County School System With Data for Improvement and Extension of Vocational Education -- Dr. Fred Stuart -- VTAD-566-8

27. An Agricultural Occupations Survey -- Polk County -- VTAD-566-92

28. A Survey of Agricultural Occupations -- Santa Rosa County -- Wyman L. Jones -- VTAD-566-82

29. An Area Vocational Survey of Four Counties -- St. Johns County -- W. D. Hartley -- VTAD-566-68

30. A Survey of Related Agricultural Occupations -- Suwannee County -- H. Wilson Suggs -- VTAD-566-85

31. An Occupational Survey of Walton County -- Burvin E. Pugh -- VTAD-566-22

32. County Survey of Occupational Needs -- Putnam County

33. A Study to Develop Vocational, Technical, and Adult Education in Brevard County

34. A Follow-Up Study of Former Vocational Students in Pinellas County — VTAD-567-

35. A Pilot Program for Curriculum Development for Disadvantaged Junior High School Students in Dade County -- VTAD-567-

36. An Introduction Course to Vocations For Selected Students in Brevard County -- VTAD-567-

37. Experimental Curriculum for Ninth Grade Home Economics Students -- Broward County

38. Development, Evaluation, and Dissemination of a DCT Program (State-Wide)

39. Development, Evaluation, and Dissemination of a Junior High School Work Experience Program Curriculum (State-Wide)

40. An Experimental Project to Determine Interrelationships of Selected Motivational Factors on Career Choices Made by Disadvantaged Junior High School Youth -- VTAD-568-

41. Dissemination of Vocational Office Education Programs — A Cooperative Study with University of Florida Business Education Department and The Michigan State University

42. Experimental Program In Junior College Technical Mathematics

43. Cost/Effectiveness Study of Post Secondary School Programs: A Pilot Study (Florida State University)

44. An Experimental Project to Determine Attitudinal Changes of Disadvantaged Junior High School Students

45. An Institute for Guidance Counselor Personnel

46. A Study of Nursing in Florida with Implications for Nursing Education

The listing shows that projects approved for funding through Section 4(c) of P. L. 88-210 are concerned with development of human resources and educational facilities and arrangements. Projects approved to use state ancillary funds, were concerned to a great extent with surveys designed to improve understandings of job opportunities, employer expectations, research problem

identification, program development, and evaluation.

The following discussion of several projects will show how funded proposals aid in the accomplishment of Unit objectives. An Assessment of Occupational Opportunities in the State of Florida Which Utilize Knowledge and Skills Derived From the Field of Home Economics, has supplied information concerning competencies, skills and understandings needed by those who are employed in home economics-related occupations. The information has led to the development of programs of instruction designed to adequately meet their needs. The programs were field-tested during the 1968-69 school year. They will be disseminated throughout the state in demonstration schools during 1970-71.

The second project, titled, Professional Competency of Teachers of Technical Education, was conducted to help teacher educators determine if professional competency in teachers of technical education is a function of a number of educational variables. It provided basic data from which indices predictive of competency in teachers of technical education were derived.

A Pilot Study in Typewriting, was designed to prepare the way for a broader and perhaps deeper study of the comparative effectiveness of varied class sizes with a variety of instructional personnel in first-year typing. Results of the study have led to projects developed to effect a saving of instructional time per student and thereby reduce the instructional cost per student.

The concern of vocational leaders with survey-type research, involving an identification of employment needs and opportunities, is indicative of a basic need, identified during the First RCU Conference. Establishment of a Unit to continually gather information concerning current and projected labor market demands, job competencies required by employers, availability of manpower for training and other pertinent information needed to plan and implement realistic high quality occupational education programs is presently being conducted. Personnel were employed during fiscal year 1968-69 to develop an information system which will be useful to educational decision makers responsible for developing and maintaining a meaningful vocational education program. If the system has merit, additional personnel are to be stationed in metropolitan areas of the State to make constant reports of data to a central office for wide distribution to educators needing the information.

Evaluation of occupational education in the state is a continuing responsibility of the Division of Vocational, Technical, and Adult Education, and logically becomes a primary concern of the RCU. Without evaluation, there is no alternative but to rely on authority

of tradition, intuitive judgment, and legislative mandate to provide direction for vocational-technical education endeavors. A need has been identified for research in the area of evaluation. The Unit has been expanded to include an evaluative function. A major purpose of the evaluative studies will be to point out where improvements are needed and how such improvements may be introduced. Lack of available qualified personnel to work in this area has prevented the Unit from accomplishing many stated goals. A project funded during the 1968-69 fiscal year produced a format for use by local school personnel in determining cost/effectiveness of programs in area vocational centers.

During the period of this report, Accreditation Standards For Vocational and Adult Secondary and Post-Secondary Schools was cooperatively developed and field-tested in selected schools throughout the State. Results obtained from the evaluation were the basis upon which the standards were revised. They will be used throughout the State during the 1971-72 school year.

Two other vocational programs have been developed and are presently being evaluated through planned field tests. If found to have value, they will be demonstrated during the 1970-71 school year.

CONCLUSIONS

Activities of the Florida Unit have touched upon all aspects of program improvement through planned change for which it assumed coordinative responsibility during the first and extended grant periods.

There is need to continue the coordinative function as a basic guide to further efforts designed to improve vocational education through planned program change.

Work should be continued in each of the broad functions of the Unit program with added emphasis in: (a) field testing promising programs and disseminating new programs, methods, and techniques through the setting of demonstration schools; (b) expanding Unit efforts to include a comprehensive evaluation of vocational-technical education in the state; (c) establishment of an in-service program to train interested and capable local staff members in research techniques to ease the immediate shortage of program ancillary service personnel needed to work on identified problems in single and multi-county areas; (d) assisting in the establishment of a planning unit to gather information, on a continuous basis, needed to maintain, expand, and improve vocational-technical programs in the state; (e) continuing to serve as an acquisition source for the ERIC system; (f)

completing the development of a data bank of research and related studies; (g) repackaging and distributing products and information materials for specific target audiences; (h) developing information analysis material such as synthesis papers on specific high-priority problems in vocational education.